1; Belgrave F-3 (no date) 1953 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2

644

H.E. SHAIKH ISA BIN SULMAN AL-KHALIFAH,
eldest son of the Ruler of Bahrain.

Photo :
National Art Studio.

In complexion the people vary greatly, some, especially those who work in offices, are very fair, while the African element in the population has produced the opposite colouring. During the past ten years the fashion among the men of Bahrain for wearing partly European dress has developed rapidly, mainly due to the operations of the oil company, where long flowing robes are not only a nuisance but often dangerous. The older men, however, and the members of the Ruling Family still wear the traditional Arab dress which can be seen in its full glory in the picture of H.H. The Ruler. The basic garment is the "thobe," a long shirt fastened up to the neck, above it comes a cloak of brown, white or black wool, with gold braided edges, the "bisht" or "aba". On the head is a small skull cap, not usually visible, over which is a white or coloured headcloth "gutra' held in place by means of a black or white wool ring, called "agal." The last was originally a camel hobble which the bedouin in the desert used to wear on their heads when travelling, removing it when in camp, but today it has lost its original use and is just an article of attire. Members of the Ruling Family, all of whom use the title "Shaikh," wear gold head-rings on formal occasions, while H.H. The Ruler and the senior members of the family wear swords and daggers in gold scabbards.

142 291 [177] 644 292

The purdah system still exists in Bahrain, although it is gradually being modified, and women are veiled when they appear in public; the more old fashioned wearing black masks concealing the upper part of the face, the younger contenting themselves with veils of black net. Although many women in the towns wear European clothes, nylons and cosmetics, they never appear outside their houses without a voluminious black cloak which covers them from the tops of their heads to the ground. In the country the Baharna women wear a large square shawl, black, blue or sometimes brightly covered, which conceals the clothes they wear. Despite the impression which may have been given by this description of veiling still current in Bahrain, the women of the country are now living a much wider life than formerly. Many girls go to the schools where as well as doing lessons they play games and do gymnastics, and what they learn at school gives them more interests at home when they marry. Family parties are commoner and husbands will now allow themselves to be seen driving with their wives in cars, which some years ago was almost unknown. In many ways the life of the women of Bahrain is improving. However, a fact that visitors to Bahrain should remember is that attempts to take photographs of women are usually strongly resented though the ordinary Arab male is fairly immune to the photographic enthusiasm of visiting Europeans.

562 291 562 178

In Bahrain, unlike most other parts of the Arab World, the upper classes of Arab society have retained their traditional dress, while the working classes have adopted shirts and trousers. A result of this is that one should not be surprised if young men dressed in Arab clothes speak excellent English, know much about European history, French cooking and American enterprise, for they have probably been educated at the American University of Beirut or in Egypt or England. The

551 291 177 000

625
659

The people of Bahrain are extremely law abiding and there is very little crime. A force of 300 uniformed police and 200 armed watchmen is responsible for the maintenance of law and order. The Police headquarters is the Fort to the south-west of Manama, this also contains the Traffic Department, the jail for short term convicts and the police barracks. There are police stations in various districts of Manama and Muharraq and in Hedd, Budaiya, Jaw, Sitra and elsewhere in Bahrain.

653
647
377
647

Most of the Government buildings in Bahrain are constructed by the Public Works Department whose offices and yards are on the northern shore of Manama south of the Manama-Muharraq Causeway. This department is also responsible for the Manama town water supply and the upkeep of roads and bridges. Close to the Public Works Department, on the opposite side of the Causeway, is the power house and office of the State Engineer. Electricity was first installed in Manama in 1929, later it was extended to Muharraq. The Power Station now generates about 7½ million Kw. per annum.

647

In addition to these departments there are others including the Transport Section, near the Police Fort, and the Agricultural Department which runs experimental gardens in Budiaya and Manama and gives advice to Bahrain agriculturalists.

THE RULING FAMILY OF BAHRAIN

643

The Ruler :

HIS HIGHNESS SHAIKH SULMAN BIN HAMED AL-KHALIFAH, K.C.M.G., K.C.I.E.

644

Sons of the Ruler :

HIS EXCELLENCY SHAIKH ISA BIN SULMAN AL-KHALIFAH.
HIS EXCELLENCY SHAIKH KHALIFAH BIN SULMAN AL-KHALIFAH.
HIS EXCELLENCY SHAIKH MUHAMMAD BIN SULMAN AL-KHALIFAH.

Uncles of the Ruler :

HIS EXCELLENCY SHAIKH ABDULLA BIN ISA AL-KHALIFAH, C.I.E.
HIS EXCELLENCY SHAIKH MUHAMMAD BIN ISA AL-KHALIFAH, C.B.E.

Brothers of the Ruler :

SHAIKH MUBARAK BIN HAMED AL-KHALIFAH.
SHAIKH ABDULLA BIN HAMED AL-KHALIFAH.
SHAIKH ALI BIN HAMED AL-KHALIFAH.
SHAIKH IBRAHIM BIN HAMED AL-KHALIFAH.
SHAIKH KHALIFAH BIN HAMED AL-KHALIFAH.
SHAIKH DAIJ BIN HAMED AL-KHALIFAH.
SHAIKH AHMED BIN HAMED AL-KHALIFAH.

Sons of Shaikh Abdulla bin Isa :

SHAIKH RASHID BIN ABDULLA AL-KHALIFAH.
SHAIKH ALI BIN ABDULLA AL-KHALIFAH.
SHAIKH HAMED BIN ABDULLA AL-KHALIFAH.

644 *Sons of Shaikh Muhammad bin Isa* :

SHAIKH AHMED BIN MUHAMMAD AL-KHALIFAH.
SHAIKH ALI BIN MUHAMMAD AL-KHALIFAH.
SHAIKH KHALIFAH BIN MUHAMMED AL-KHALIFAH.
SHAIKH IBRAHIM BIN MUHAMMAD AL-KHALIFAH.
SHAIKH SULMAN BIN MUHAMMAD AL-KHALIFAH.
SHAIKH HAMED BIN MUHAMMAD AL-KHALIFAH.
SHAIKH ABD AL-AZIZ BIN MUHAMMAD AL-KHALIFAH.
SHAIKH ISA BIN MUHAMMAD AL-KHALIFAH.

647 HEADS OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Adviser to the Government and Commandant State Police : SIR CHARLES BELGRAVE, K.B.E.
Director of Customs : MR. G. W. R. SMITH, M.B.E.
Minister of Education : H.E. SHAIKH ABDULLA BIN ISA AL-KHALIFAH, C.I.E.
Director of Education : MR. AHMED AL-UMRAN.
Directoress of Female Education : LADY BELGRAVE.
Officer in Charge Finance Department : MR. SAYED MAHMOUD ALAWI.
Officer in Charge Judicial Department : MR. SALIM AL-ARAYEDH.
Superintendent State Police : SHAIKH KHALIFAH BIN MUHAMMAD AL-KHALIFAH.
State Medical Officer : DR. R. H. B. SNOW, M.B.E.
State Engineer : MR. D. BRAMMER.
Superintendent Minors' Estates Department : MR. MUHAMMAD DOWAIGER.
Superintendent of the Land Department : KHAN SAHIB MUHAMMAD KHALIL MENON.
Officer in Charge Passport and Emigration Department : MR. KADHIM ASFOUR.
Officer in Charge Public Works Department : MAJOR S. HILLS.
President of the Religious Endowments Committee :
Shia : HAJ MOHSEN AT-TAJIR.
Sunni : SHAIKH ATIYYATALLAH AL-KHALIFAH.
Officer in Charge Transport Department : MR. J. L. MORRIS.
Director of Agriculture : MR. W. W. VAN OLLENBACH.
Secretaries of the Municipalities :
Manama : MR. MUHAMMAD SALIH SHATR.
Muharraq and Hedd : MR. IBRAHIM KHALFAN.
Rifaa (East and West) President : SHAIKH ABDULLA BIN KHALID AL-KHALIFAH
Secretary Bahrain Chamber of Commerce : MR. RASHID ZAYANI.

CHAPTER IV

COMMUNICATIONS

508 BAHRAIN, owing to its central position in the Persian Gulf, is the natural stopping place for air services between the Middle East and the Far East and for this reason it is a port of call for many air companies. Bahrain's Airport is on Muharraq Island, a short drive from the town, and is sufficiently large to take the newest types of aircraft including the B.O.A.C. Comet which started services through Bahrain in August, 1952. There is in addition a Persian Gulf air service, Gulf Aviation Company Ltd., in which the Bahrain Government has an important interest and whose headquarters is at Muharraq.

509 Air travel is very popular in the Persian Gulf and there has been a great increase in the air traffic to and from Bahrain. In the twelve

1: Belgrave F-3 (no date) 1953 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2

• 644

The Ruler's Palace at Rifaa al-Gharbi. Photo : *National Art Studio.*

323
224

An Asli potter making jar tops.

A hunting falcon on the hand of one of the Ruler's retainers. Photo . *Sir Charles Belgrave.*

361 when the date pickers descend on the village and put up their barastis.
245 Lower Sehlah is reached by a bridge across the water channel that borders the Manama-Awali Road. This village is surrounded by date gardens and can also be reached by a footpath from Adari. The gardens in the neighbourhood of the two villages are among the best and most thriving in Bahrain, and the date groves are locally described as the hump of Bahrain, not because they rise above the surrounding lands but on account of their being the richest and most fertile in the islands.

AALI

361 After leaving the palm belt and entering the plain north of Rifaa, thick smoke can usually be seen rising from among some date gardens to the west, this is the village of Aali, one of the largest in Bahrain. It lies on the western edge of the plain which extends from the end of the date gardens at the bridge of Radhm al-Qawari to the Rifaa hills, and is close to a group of the largest tumuli in Bahrain which are a conspicuous feature of the landscape of Bahrain island. The largest mounds in the Aali group are over 80 feet high and 100 feet in diameter.
[491] The best road to Aali is the one indicated by the sign-post on Awal
[342] Road, a short distance from Radhm al-Qawari. The houses of this village are better than in most of the Bahrain villages; they are large and airy and some of them have blocks of stone from the tombs in their walls. As in the case of so many Bahrain villages, Aali stands on a slight elevation surrounded by date gardens.

RIFAA AL-GHARBI

644 Straddling Awal Road on the edge of the rim-rock is the town of
361 West Rifaa, the winter residence of H.H. The Ruler of Bahrain as well as of many of his family and retainers. This settlement is comparatively modern, having been built by the present Ruler before he succeeded in 1942. Constructed in the traditional Arab pattern, the Palace is in the centre of the town and the other houses are widely scattered about it. The Ruler's love of gardens has caused the road to be lined with trees, and it is a pleasant surprise on coming across the desert surrounding the town to pass through a shady green avenue. During the three months of the Summer the Ruler lives in Manama, but as soon as the cool weather returns a long procession of cars and lorries moves slowly out of Rifaa, the lights go on, and overnight the appearance of West Rifaa is changed from a deserted town to a scene of much activity.

RIFAA ASH-SHARQI

361 This is the fourth largest town in Bahrain and has a population
712 of about 3,000. East Rifaa is without doubt the most picturesque of Bahrain's towns and villages. When approached from the west, from the plain near Awali, the fortress, which dominates the valley, presents a most romantic appearance and carries one's thoughts back

5: Bahrain G-5 (1926-1937) 1937 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2

871

which caused considerable resentment among the Shias, although at that time the proportion of Shias at the Government schools was much lower than it is now. If more care had been given to the selection of the candidates, this experiment would have been more successful. The boys remained at Beyrout for two years; a longer course would have been more useful to them but, mainly owing to financial reasons, the Government decided not to extend their time.

Some years have now passed since these boys returned to Bahrain, and the result of their education can now be seen. In my opinion, it was successful in the case of three of the boys, moderately successful in the case of three, and a complete failure in the case of one boy. If the boys had been younger when they left Bahrain, I believe that the experiment would have been a complete success.

871
644

Education of the Ruling Family.

In 1925, Shaikh Hamad allowed two of his sons to go as boarders to the American Mission school in Basrah. They stayed there for one term and did not return to school.

In 1930 a tutor was obtained from India to teach Shaikh Hamad's younger sons. He was well recommended and highly qualified and had previously been in charge of an Indian princeling. Although the tutor worked hard under difficult conditions and did his best to teach his pupils, it was soon apparent that his employment was a waste of his time and of the Government's money. The tutor lived in Shaikh Hamad's house, but the boys were disinclined to work and so did nothing. It was impossible to bring any compulsion on them to do their lessons. The experiment was a complete failure and, after completing one year, the tutor's agreement was not renewed.

871
185

Future Development of Education.

There is danger in the creation of a class of semi-educated young men in Bahrain who, because they have a little learning, regard themselves as too superior to do manual work and who will become too many to find employment of a clerical nature. The people, however, especially the Shias, are urgent in their demands for increased education, and more schools, and in reply to this the Government intends to open more small country schools in the villages. A knowledge of reading, writing, and simple arithmetic is all that is needed by boys from the villages, most of whom will eventually become divers, cultivators, and fishermen. In these occupations, school education is unnecessary, though for divers and fishermen a knowledge of figures is some assurance against being swindled.

Boys who attend the town schools in Manamah and Muharraq are mostly sons of shopkeepers, merchants, and pearl traders, and many of them enter their fathers' shops and offices, where they benefit from a knowledge of accounts, book-keeping, and the more advanced education which is given at the two big schools.

If the newly started technical classes are successful, the Government will develop this experiment and, if possible, introduce more subjects which will provide lucrative employment for trained boys when they leave school. It should be possible for boys who have learned carpentry, etc., at school to secure employment with the Bahrain Petroleum Company in place of some of the many foreign artisans who are now employed by the Company.

ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT

377
653

Original Installation.

The possibility of introducing electricity in Manamah was first considered over ten years ago, and for some time funds were set aside for the purpose; it was not, however, till 1928 that any action was taken by the Government. That year the services of Mr. Stevenson, electrical inspector in Sind, were obtained in an advisory capacity and a scheme was prepared by him in Bahrain, together with plans for the layout and a rough specification. Bahrain was then in a prosperous condition, and it was estimated that the initial load would be not less than 2,000 lamps and 200 fans. The people in Manamah were anxious to form a public company, but after consideration this suggestion was dropped, and eventually it was decided that the scheme was to be undertaken by the Government and the Manamah Municipality.

5: Bahrain G-5 (1926-1937) 1937 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2

are chairs, tables, window curtains, often framed pictures and photographs, and usually a gramophone; in the houses of the wealthier people there is often a wireless set. Coffee shops reflect the change in ways of living. They are important institutions in Bahrain and take the place of clubs or cafes in Europe. Each has its regular clientele, but the popularity of individual coffee shops varies according to fashion. Ten years ago, coffee shops were usually small shops inside the bazaar, furnished with a few rough benches, where little else than coffee could be obtained. To-day, most of the coffee shops are elaborately decorated and illuminated, provided with little tables and chairs, and a gramophone or a wireless set which plays loudly and incessantly, relaying Arabic programmes to the customers. Some of the coffee shops are divided into two parts: in one part only coffee and drinks are served, and in the other part regular meals can be obtained, including Indian and Persian dishes, bread, cakes, and ices in the summer. Most of the proprietors are foreigners—Indians, Persians, and Iraqi, who are more enterprising in these matters than the local people. The bigger coffee shops are now referred to by the public as 'otels.'

Games. The popularity of games is another recent development during the last ten years. Before this, nobody played games except the men of the Levy Corps, who were made to do so, which was regarded as a peculiarity of the Commanding Officer. To-day, there are half-a-dozen local football teams and several hockey teams, who play against each other or against teams of sailors or Europeans from the Bahrain Petroleum Company. They play well, and are very keen, and every match attracts a large and interested audience from the town. Many of the parents of the young men who play disapprove of hockey and football, which they consider dangerous and unnecessary, chiefly because they did not play themselves when they were young. There is an entire lack of class distinction in these games: the sons of shaikhs play side-by-side with policemen, clerks, and taxi drivers. Although games have improved the physique of those who play them, the use of motor cars instead of horses or donkeys has caused a great many people to become soft and flabby. Sons of wealthy fathers, especially the young members of the Ruling Family, have entirely left off taking any exercise. They use a car to go a few yards; they never walk, and the only occasion on which they ride a horse is during marriage celebration or on public holidays, such as the annual accession celebrations.

Class Changes. The depression in the pearl trade and the recent improvement in the bazaars has caused an upheaval in financial positions, and with it a certain change in the political importance of classes. This change is gradually, though unwillingly, being appreciated by the Ruling Family. In the days when the pearl trade was flourishing, pearl merchants and nakhudas were the monied classes, and their money gave them great power, which they did not scruple to use for their own benefit. To-day, the men who used to be worth lacs of rupees are, in many cases, almost bankrupt, and petty traders, shop-keepers, and men who happen to own property in Manamah, are becoming the monied class. The old powerful pearl merchants were, in many cases, self-made men who started life as divers, but their wealth made them important and, though most of them could neither read or write, they were the people who mattered in Bahrain. Many of these men have lost all their influence because their money has gone. The class which is now becoming prosperous is more progressive, more mixed, and better educated, but as a community it does not hang together because, unlike the case of the pearl industry, its prosperity does not depend upon one trade alone. One of the serious disadvantages of the change is that the pearl industry provided work, during part of the year, for many thousands of men, but the people who are now making money provide little employment for the people. At present, about five thousand divers are working in the oil field. They are making a great deal more money than they would normally make from diving and, besides earning money, they are paying back their debts to the nakhudas by regular monthly instalments, so both parties are satisfied; but this employment is not permanent and, when present construction work at the oil field is finished, there will be a sudden increase in unemployment which will have to be dealt with by the Government.

The Ruling Family. The life and outlook of the members of the Ruling Family, with a few notable exceptions, has changed less than that of any other community. Although there is a great difference between the outlook of the older men and those who have grown up during the last ten years, the attitude of the family as a whole is

●644 461 471 still that of feudal chiefs, though the feudal feeling no longer exists among the people of Bahrain. They consider it their right that they should be well provided for financially by the State, and they resent any suggestion that they should add to their incomes by doing work. They are still the biggest landowners in Bahrain, but by draining their property dry, and not spending any money on improvements, their property has deteriorated in value. They regard any real work as degrading, and only accept posts on courts or councils for the sake of obtaining more money, not because it is incumbent on them, as members of the Ruling Family, to occupy public positions. Their attitude in this respect is a contrast to that of the merchant class in Bahrain, who are unusually public minded and who freely give up much of their time to sit on courts and committees and councils.

562 178 185 **The Women.** Among the women, too, there have been changes, but they are more gradual than among the men. Every step towards emancipation is firmly resisted by the older female members of the households, but in spite of this there is a definite feeling among the younger women that they should have more freedom. Their ambition, at present, is not to take any part in public matters, but to be able to go out more frequently. They are becoming restive of the restrictions of the purdah system. Some are now educated, and a few have travelled abroad in Syria, Persia, India, and Iraq, and there they have seen the changes which are taking place in the life of the women of those countries. Many who have never been out of Bahrain read newspapers and listen to news on wireless sets, and frequently meet Indian and Syrian women in Bahrain. All this causes them to feel unsettled.

[595] One of the notable recent changes is that nowadays a great many young men only marry one wife, not because they cannot afford to support more wives, but because they prefer monogamy. The younger men are no longer ashamed of mentioning their wives and talking about their families, and many of them take their wives out with them in cars. A few years ago, if a man was seen with a woman in his car, one could be quite sure that she was not his wife. The modern young men look for wives who are educated, and frequently marry Persian or Iraqi girls because they received better education. One of the effects of education among the women in Bahrain is that they learn to keep their houses clean and they appreciate the value of hygiene, which is taught at school. Education also makes them willing to employ qualified doctors, especially at childbirth, when, in the past, they would have been treated by local Arab untrained midwives who are dirty and dangerous, and whose use of the notorious salt method is undoubtedly responsible for an enormous number of casualties among children and pregnant women.

Changes are taking place all over the Gulf, but of the Arab States, Bahrain is changing most rapidly. The most conspicuous visible changes in comparing Bahrain to-day and ten years ago are in the capital, where a person returning to the country would notice the wider streets, better buildings, and a decrease in straw huts, trees, gardens and more vegetation, large shops selling European goods, motor traffic, European dress worn by natives, increasing use of machinery, partly owing to installation of electric power, knowledge of English language, and far greater interest being taken in outside world affairs.

6:Faroughy H-5 (no date)1951 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2

• 644

PALACE OF THE SHEIK OF BAHREIN

[facing page 95]